

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2012



**Chief Jeff Spaulding
Westminster PD
410-848-4646**

'Flame of Hope' Arrives in Westminster

***Law Enforcement Officers Participate in Statewide Torch Run Relay as Show of Support for the
Special Olympics Maryland Summer Games
Maryland Torch Run Celebrates 27 Years of Success***

Law Enforcement officers representing the police agencies throughout Carroll County will be on the run on Wednesday, June 6th beginning at 8:00 am, taking part in the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run Relay for Special Olympics Maryland. Their mission: to escort and protect the Special Olympics 'Flame of Hope' as it makes its way toward the opening of the 42nd Anniversary Summer Games at Towson University, June 08-10.

This year marks the 27th Anniversary of the Maryland Torch Run, a movement that began in 1986 with a handful of officers raising \$5,000, and has grown into a true year-round effort that involves thousands of officers and raised \$3.3 million in 2011. Since its inception, the Torch Run has taken very seriously its role as "Guardians of the Flame", and the Relay is an important and celebrated part of every Special Olympics competition.

The schedule for the Carroll County Torch Run event is as follows (all times are approximate and subject to change):

The schedule for the Carroll County leg of the Torch Run is as follows:

- Six legs will be departing from the corners of the county to carry the Flame of Hope to Westminster on June 6th. Those legs will begin at the following locations:
 - **Sykesville Leg** – Departing the gymnasium at the Maryland Police Training Commission training facility @ 8:15 a.m. Runners will include the MSP Trooper Candidate Class, the MPTC Police Academy Class and runners from MSP, the Sykesville Police Department and the Springfield

3701 Commerce Drive, Suite 103, Baltimore MD 21227 ■ PH: 410.242.1515/ 800.541.7544 ■ FX: 410.242.2580 ■ www.somd.org

Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation Authorized and Accredited by Special Olympics, Inc. for the Benefit of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities



Police Department. **Carroll County Special Olympics Athletes Catherine Gardner and Jesse Shaffer** will also be participating.

- **Hampstead/Manchester Leg** – Departing the Manchester Police Department @ 9:00 a.m. Runners will include Hampstead and Manchester Police Department officers and staff, as well as **Carroll County Special Olympics Athlete Woody Higgs**.
- **Taneytown Leg** – Departing the Taneytown Bowling Center @ 9:00 a.m. Runners will include the Taneytown Police Department, the Carroll County State's Attorney's Office and members of the Carroll County Crisis Response Team. **Carroll County Special Olympics Athlete Tammy Holibaugh** will also be participating.
- **Mount Airy Leg** – Departing the Mount Airy Fire Department @ 8:00 a.m. Troopers assigned to the Westminster Barrack of MSP will be running this leg, along with **Carroll County Special Olympics Athlete Jessica Zuback**.
- **Union Bridge/New Windsor Leg** – Departing the Union Bridge Fire Department @ 9:00 a.m. Runners will include the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, the Carroll County Detention Center and the Carroll County State's Attorney's Office. **Carroll County Special Olympics Athletes Cody Watter** will also be participating.
- **Torch Run Trek (walking leg)** – Departing the Carroll County Farm Museum @ 10:00 a.m. Walkers will include representatives of the Carroll County State's Attorney's Office as well as a number of employees from Carroll County Government and the City of Westminster. **Carroll County Special Olympics Athlete Riley Snyder** will also be participating in the Trek.
- **Final Leg** – All runners from the various legs of the event will participate in the Final Leg of the Torch Run from McDaniel College to the Westminster Family Center. **Carroll County Special Olympics Athletes Andrew Nies and Mary Linthicum** will also be participating in this leg of the event.

This local portion of the Torch Run Relay is part of a much larger effort. Statewide, the Maryland Torch Run Relay consists of four different legs – Eastern, Western, Central and Southern – and throughout the entire week, thousands of Torch Run volunteers will cover hundreds of miles, eventually converging on Towson where the individual flames will be united in the Final Leg Ceremony and then officers from around the state will travel the final 2.5 miles to the Opening Ceremony at Towson University. It is there that the Flame is handed off to the Special Olympics athletes who have the honor of taking the final lap with the torch and then lighting the cauldron and officially declaring the 2012 SOMD Summer Games open.

"The Torch Run Relay represents the culmination of a year-round involvement with Special Olympics Maryland by dedicated officers from around the state. These efforts include fundraising and awareness campaigns to help bring much needed funds to the thousands of athletes around Maryland," said

Captain John Newnan, Law Enforcement Torch Run Director for Maryland. "It provides the opportunity for law enforcement agencies from each county throughout Maryland to come together and celebrate the successes of the Law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Special Olympics as we carry the Flame of Hope throughout the state and share a message of hope, acceptance and tolerance to the community at large. Our goal is to create inspiring moments where we can increase the communities' awareness about possibilities, not about disabilities."

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Maryland is a year-round movement whose goal is to raise both funds and awareness for the athletes who train and compete in Special Olympics Maryland. The Maryland Torch Run began in 1986 with a handful of officers raising \$5,000. Since that time, the Maryland Torch Run has grown tremendously, including volunteer officers from nearly every law enforcement agency and correctional facility in Maryland, and through special events such as the MSP Polar Bear Plunge, the annual Torch Run T-shirt sales and other efforts, raising \$3.3 million for SOMD in 2011, and once again earning "Top Fundraising Program" honors at the annual International Torch Run Conference.

The 42nd Anniversary SOMD Summer Games are set for June 08-10 at Towson University. During this celebrated weekend, 1,400 athletes from around the state will go for gold in aquatics, athletics, bocce, cheerleading and softball.

For more information about Special Olympics Maryland, the Torch Run Relay and the 2012 Summer Games, contact Jason Schriml at 410-242-1515 x118 or visit www.somd.org.

##

SOMD is a year-round sports organization dedicated to providing quality sports training and competition opportunities to Maryland's children and adults with intellectual disabilities and/or closely related development disabilities. SOMD currently serves thousands of athletes statewide, and offers 24 sports, all at no cost to the athletes or their families. For more information about SOMD visit www.somd.org or call 410-789-6677.

##